

2004 Report of Accomplishments

Pend Oreille Conservation District (POCD)



Mission of the Pend Oreille Conservation District

The Pend Oreille Conservation District is dedicated to protect, enhance, conserve and restore the natural resources of Pend Oreille County (POC) while fostering community involvement in natural resource issues and promoting cooperation between private landowners, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private business.

Watershed Planning HB 2514

- The Watershed Planning Unit (WPU), a grassroots organization made up of landowners, farmers, business interests and agencies who are working together to draft a Watershed Management Plan, which will be the basis of watershed planning on into the future. The POC Planning Commission intends to use the document as a point of reference while they develop their own Comprehensive Plan.
- POCD is the Lead Agency in charge of facilitating this very diverse group of about 20 people and agencies.
- Completed Phase II, Level 2 assessment resulting in the most comprehensive report on the status of Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 62 ever written.
- WPU installed and monitored seven stations on selected tributaries as part of their on-going efforts to collect data important to the completion of the Watershed Management Plan this year.

Wildlife and Recreation

- County's retailers selling hunting and fishing license, again this year, have handed out over 3500 plastic covers for licenses depicting local salmonids. The goal: bring awareness to identifying Bull Trout. POCD has also handed out more than 2000 Bull Trout tattoos showing a Bull Trout with the slogan "No Black Put It Back".

Water Quality Sampling

- POCD is currently working a grant with DOE titled: "Pend Oreille Watershed Ranking" (POWR), collecting water quantity and quality data on 16 watersheds. During this reporting period, 176 water quantity and 2464 water quality samples were taken.
- Have conducted six public meetings with "Citizen's Committees" to get their input on the writing of this report.
- Worked with students from Spokane Community College on mapping portions of this study area. This allowed students to work a "Real World" project while POCD out sourced needed sections of the report and gained In-kind at the same time.



Salmonid (Bull Trout) Recovery - Fish Passage Barrier Survey

- The Salmonid Recovery Team (SRT) consists of the Lead Entity Coordinator (POCD) a Technical Advisory Group (15 members) and Citizen's Advisory Group (20 members). Having developed a current habitat strategy and project list, SRT submits projects to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board on an annual basis.
- POCD co-sponsored a grant with the Kalispel Tribe of Indians to conduct fish barrier surveys in WRIA 62. This is the first survey of this type to be conducted on privately owned lands in Pend Oreille County. The Kalispel's will use this information to do fish surveys above and below each barrier.
- 636 streamside properties were located, mapped and landowners contacted to obtain permission for access.
- 46 miles of stream habitat were assessed for quantity and quality.
- 119 in-stream, artificial structures were evaluated for fish passage.
- Data for all field data to date has been entered in the WDFW fish passage database.

Information & Education

- POCD believes in an active natural resource, conservation and environmental educational program for children and adults alike and leads the way in POC when it comes to K-12 education (5th Grade Water Festival, Pend Oreille Regional Envirothon, 6th Grade Conservation Days, Natural Resource Day, 3rd Grade "Bugs in the Pond", Washington State Envirothon). This year's annual events for K-12 reached over 700 county students and more than 125 kids from Idaho and Spokane County. Businesses from both counties



volunteer their personnel as well as funds to enthusiastically support Conservation District programs.

- Over 3500 issues of POCD's "Watershed News" newsletters we mailed and handed out this year.
- This year, POCD partnered with DNR, the USFS and local community businesses to educate 1,500 County, private and home schooled students; ages pre-school through fourth grade on fire safety and fire behavior in and around the home including meeting Smokey Bear, touring the EDITH House (Exit Drills In The Home) showing kids how to exit homes and finally a taste of FireWise training on creating "Defendable Space" between your home and forestlands. (Close to 70% of the land in POC are USFS lands and most of the County's residents live in rural areas with only volunteer fire departments to render aid.)

Community Collaboration & Coordination

- POCD, NRCS and POC Fire Districts with funding from the DNR selected sites to install seven more dry hydrants in POC. Dry hydrants provide a convenient source of water for emergency fire fighting in rural areas. NRCS has completed all the written plans and received permission to install the dry hydrants. Landowners provide easements when necessary to insure access.
- Introduced the "Bio Diesel" VW to the residents of POC through a forum partnered with the Spokane County Conservation District. Bio diesel is an alternative fuel source using processed vegetable oil.

Projects

- **Cedar Creek:** This high priority ESA bull trout stream has fish passage blockages consisting of a triple culvert, and an abandoned log crib dam. Our NE Area Cluster and the USFWS engineers designed plans for the replacement of the bridge, removal of the old abandoned log crib dam and the reconstruction of the stream channel providing woody debris and rock structure for cover and pools.
- **Bear Paw Creek:** NE Area Cluster engineer is designing a sediment basin to trap spring runoff from entering the creek off an abandoned road, and a bridge to replace a failing wooden bridge.
- **Indian Creek:** A high priority ESA bull trout stream. Project corrects three artificial drop-structure barriers and removal of two culvert barriers to be replaced with a bridge and a pipe arch; effectively re-opening passage to over two miles of bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout habitat. This project also includes installation of WDFW-approved screens on three water diversions preventing fish impingement and entrapment, over 120 feet of streambank reconstruction, 400 feet of stream channel complexity restoration, and 0.3 acres of riparian restoration and revegetation. The NE Area Cluster engineer provided preliminary designs and project descriptions for the grant application process and is currently in the process of developing final engineered designs.



Family Forest Fish Passage Program

- POCD has been performing fish passage barrier evaluations in POC for this new IAC program.
- POCD performed barrier evaluations for three landowners, one of which ranked high enough to have corrective action funded (see *Indian Creek Fish Passage Restoration Project*)

Forestry

- POCD's "Tree Sale" was a great success selling almost 60,000 trees and shrubs to be planted in POC.

